

1. Since the mid-1990s the Government has funded religious institutions that provide services to people in need of help. Some of the programs run by the institutions include proselytizing as part of their “therapeutic” program.

Discuss the constitutional amendment at stake in this matter, and what “provisions” of that amendment apply in this matter.

What interest groups would get involved in these issues, and how might they go about trying to influence public policy. (in answering this question specify whether the groups are institutional, membership, purposive, ideological)

Should the matter of government funding for religious institutions end up at the US Supreme Court, for example if a religious group excludes from employment someone who is of a certain race, gender or other religious persuasion, how should we view this matter in light of past cases and precedent (refer to two prior cases). Include the level of analysis, ie. Strict Scrutiny, Balancing Test, Reasonable Connection

2. President Obama, together with the House and Senate recently passed health care legislation. Some State Attorney Generals have filed suit, complaining that the mandatory

a. Constitutionally, what provisions of the Constitution and the Amendments thereto bear on the legislation and give rise to arguments against the bill? Give an example of a case and the relevant holding that supports the Attorney Generals fighting the legislation.

b. Constitutionally, what provisions of the Constitution and the Amendments should Congress have relied upon in order to pass the legislation. Give an example of a case- name and relevant holding to support the legislation.

c. Several Democratic members wavered on supporting the legislation, analyze why using the Organizational, Attitudinal and Representational standpoints

3. The 2012 Elections are on the horizon and in both 2008 and 2010 we witnessed what some have called transformative elections.

a. Was 2008 and/or 2010 a realignment election? Explain your answer

b. Discuss two important voting groups (ethnic/age/race/religion or otherwise) you feel will dramatically influence the 2012 elections, and how will they effect the races.

c. What’s the likelihood that President Obama will be renominated by his party and will there be a coattail effect?

4. President Obama has now appointed his second US Supreme Court judge in addition to several lower Federal Court Judges.

a. What is the process in the executive and legislative branches for the approval of a Federal Court Judge?

b. The above issues have a great bearing on “Federalism”, what is Federalism and how do the above issues present problems for Federalism?

c. Is a judge who rules in favor of the central government acting as a judicial activist or strict constructionist? (Define your terms and discuss)

5. More and more the Federal Budget and the consequential deficit/debt have been in the news.

a. What is the difference between the debt and the deficit?

b. How does the government get revenue, and what’s the relationship of a progressive tax system and government deficit/surplus?

c. How does the government fund its deficits?

d. What is the difference between mandatory and discretionary spending and give an example of each.

e. How do agencies and cabinets in the government try to protect their budgetary allocation?